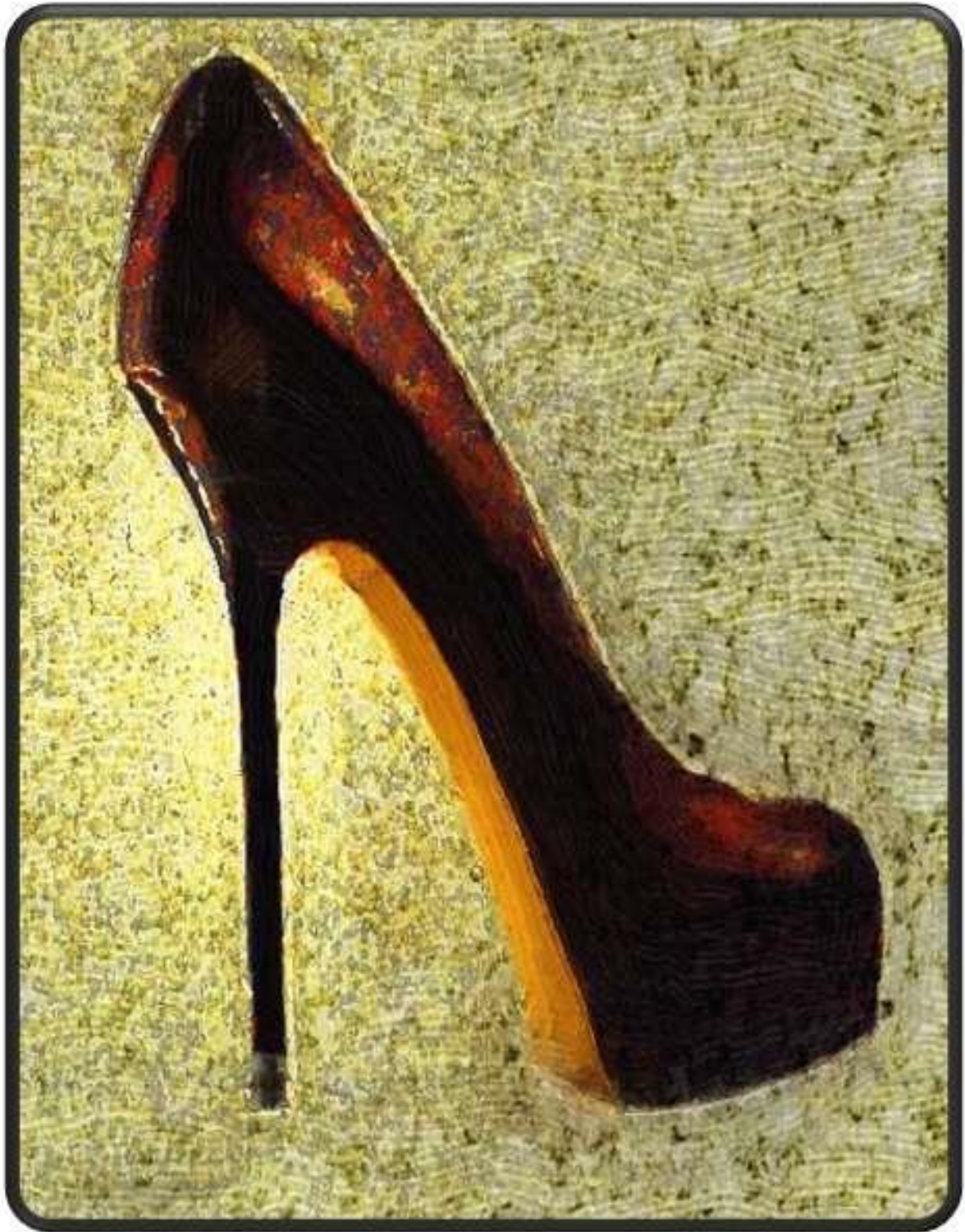


The Undersecretary



by

Miss Irene Clearmont

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FDC Publications

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Interview

“What are you looking for?”

“You know exactly what I want, Margot, darling! You have your decadent foibles and I have mine.”

“A man?”

“Probably, though I have invited a woman as well. It might make a pleasant alternative.”

“Well, I hope that you do as well as I did with Andrea.”

“I’m sure that I will, as long as I find a malleable man who is easily twisted to be my perfect little lover.”

I studied economics and failed, but it turned out that the course in typing, office management and stenography that I took to help my studies was what got me the job. In a tight jobs market, it is not those that have a Blue Riband education who get to win in the jobs market; it is those with modest qualifications that match the expectations of employers that get the jobs.

That and the right character!

That is, of course, if the interview goes well!

Sell yourself!

My name is Kerry F. O’Connell, a name that is almost a famous acronym, is easy to remember and betrays my Irish forbears. I interviewed for the job with Coxtens Bank and Investments in the early morning in the center of the City of London. It seemed from the advertisement that the job was basically secretarial and that I was being hired to be a PA to one of the directors. That was all that I knew, but I felt that I had a good chance as long as, and it is typical in these cases, the job had not already been awarded and the interviews were a formality to give the impression of balance.

I found the headquarters of Coxtens easily. A bronze plaque in the lift announced that they occupied the whole of the fifteenth floor of the Shard, prestigious and expensive for a company that I had certainly never heard of. At any rate the lift opened into a vast reception where an attractive middle-aged woman sat running the initial stages of the interview process. I found myself sitting with three other men and a woman who were all interviewing for that job and I carefully inspected them, just as they inspected me.

All around their mid-twenties and all smartly turned out. Not surprising really because, for what seemed to be a secretarial job, this one was pretty well paid. Almost no word was spoken; we

were all concentrating on that receptionist for a signal to be called to interview. After checking out the nervous interviewees I watched the impressive woman behind the reception desk.

From where I was sitting, somewhat behind her, I could appreciate her charms with a close eye. She was dressed smartly, a presentation of mature sexuality that was enjoyable to observe. No jacket, just a blouse. In profile her breasts were large and pointed, straining the white blouse to the limit so that it was easy to see that she wore no bra. Long neck with no adornment and her hair pulled into a tight bun that gave her sharp features the look of a school ma'am who had better not be crossed even though a thin smile was always on her features.

Her skirt was a long tube that came past her knees to flare with black lace where her stockings completed the look with the vicious needle thin stilettos that I could not take my eyes off. The skirt extended to way above her waist, just under those magnificent breasts, and was buttoned with a row of red buttons. Obviously, she did not move around much, that hobble skirt was so narrow! I found myself in a bit of a fantasy fugue when suddenly I heard my name called and I looked up to see a young man holding a clipboard, beckoning me to follow him.

He led me through a series of glass walled corridors where secretaries and others worked; to a wooden door that concealed an office quite unlike those of the secretariat. When he opened it, I found myself walking into an office that was such a contrast all the glass, steel, white and black of the modern design which I had seen so far. This was more like a library, some room from a gentleman's club of the Victorian era. A massive desk and a collection of comfortable armchairs and sofas with book-lined walls and old maps on the wall as decoration. Behind that desk was a woman who smiled at me as I walked in and made a small movement with the hand that I took to be an invitation to sit on the plain chair in front of the desk.

I made to sit down, but she said, "Mr. O'Connell, you have not been asked to sit yet."

Her voice was sharp and the tone cutting so I stopped and stood before the desk. Suddenly I felt as if I was an errant schoolboy who had been called in by the headmistress to be reprimanded for bad behavior. I managed to keep the shock from my features and stood straight. I did not know what to do with my hands, so I put them behind my back and waited to see what would happen next. Already this interview seemed to be going south and suddenly I realized just how much I wanted the job! What pleasure to work for an attractive woman like this.

"You may leave us, Hanna," said the woman behind the desk and the man who had brought me here left with just a small nod of the head.

"Hanna? Strange name for a man," I thought.

The door closed with a slight click and the woman pulled a file from a pile on the table. She glanced briefly at a recessed monitor on her desk and made a small mark by a list that lay in front of her before she spoke.

"Mr. Kelly Floriana O'Connell," she said, as she inspected the file.

Well, they had certainly done their homework! I had not added my second name on the application, but somehow, they had found me out. I have always hated the name 'Floriana'; the name of some aunt of my mother's that had been added against my father's objections.

"So, what is wrong with the name 'Floriana' that you don't use it?" she said. "I like the sound!"

The question seemed to require some sort of answer so I lied, "I have never really used it and I forgot to add it to the application."

"Well," she said. "I like it better than Kelly, so you'll forgive me if I use it?"

"By all means," I assented.

"Let's hope that you have not missed other things off the application form," she said. "It is just more than a little careless to lose a name you were born with."

She smiled and glanced at the monitor and then back to the open file.

"Good, then perhaps I should introduce myself. I am Ms. Davina Carina Severo," she said. "I am Chief Financial Director and in charge of all investments and hedge funds that have a nominal value of more than five million. If you are successful in your application, you will be directly responsible to me and act as personal assistant and general factotum for all my varied needs. You will be answerable only to me and I will be responsible for you entirely. Now, that seems to get the introductions out of the way, you may now sit and we shall discuss you and I may elucidate some of the work that you may be lucky enough to be doing for me!"

I uttered a 'thank you' and sat on the chair, distanced from the desk by several yards. While I could only see her from the waist up, she could observe all of my body language from head to toe. I stared at the heavy wooden front of the desk and longed to be able to see through it and admire her legs.

"Let's start with your personal status, but bear in mind that if you are unwilling to answer personal questions, then this interview can be considered to be at an end."

"I understand, please ask away!"

She frowned a little as if I was being just a little too casual in my answer and I made a mental note to remain as formal as possible. Short answers to the point seemed to be required.

"I see that you are not married," she said. "That is good! We need single people who have little in the way of commitments which could get in the way of their work for us. This is because I will demand that you remain on call, twenty-four seven, in case I need your presence. In particular, I require a great deal and will need you at my desk most of the working day."

I nodded.

“So, do you have a girlfriend, a boyfriend or are you in any sort of steady relationship.”

“No, I have never really had a steady girlfriend,” I admitted.

It seemed as though candid replies were required even though the question was so personal as to seem almost irrelevant.

“Excellent,” she said. “If you get the job, I shall expect you to keep it that way. Distractions like that are only liable to get in the way of your work and I command total commitment.”

She flipped the top paper over in the file and continued.

“I see that you failed your economics degree at LSE,” she said. “On the other hand, you claim a typing speed of fifty words a minute, comprehensive stenography and office organization.”

It seemed to be a question so I answered, “I have been practicing and usually manage about fifty-five.”

“I was not asking, please confine yourself to direct answers to enquiries and do not elaborate,” she admonished. “I am looking for a person who does nothing more nor less than ordered. He must be imaginative in satisfying my needs and will spend most of the time awaiting my commands... Typing will not take up much of your time anyway; I have something else in mind for you. Something very special. I just need utter devotion to your duties, that’s all!”

She waited a moment to see if I was going to make the same mistake of answering a non-question and then continued after the pause, “Are you that person?”

“I am.”

“Good, then we just have one or two small personal matters to discuss before I can move onto the matter of pay, conditions and hours. Should we need you to live in a location more suitable for my needs, would you be willing to relocate in a residence that allows the company to better ensure your availability?”

“You are considering sending me abroad?” I asked. “Or perhaps in some other part of the UK?”

“I, am interviewing you,” she said, “not the other way around! Would you please answer the question? I see that you are presently renting accommodation in Palmers Green. This may be too far from the City. I may wish to have you closer at hand, in this case you would be found accommodation in the center of London.”

“That would be fine,” I replied. “I would be happy to relocate!”

“Excellent,” she said, as she read the application. “So, to the last personal question. Do you have any problem with working for a female superior? Some men seem to dislike strong female management and I would prefer someone who will just do as he is told without resentment. I

tend to be rather strict and have high expectations of tractability from all those that I am responsible for. I expect total obedience, in fact I could go so far possibly describe it as subservience, perhaps. Is this a problem?"

"No problem at all."

I tried to imagine being ordered around by this woman and I have to admit that I quite liked the idea!

From then on, all the questions were the usual ones as regards attitude to absence, sickness and of course the explanation of hours and pay. I was told that the job was worth sixty thousand a year, just four weeks of holiday, the company decided when I could take, and possible bonuses for, 'good work and company results at the discretion of the executive responsible'. I answered in monosyllables and it seemed that that was what she wanted because at the end of the interview she stood and came to shake my hand.

Her hand shake was firm and definite, the long fingernails lightly scratching my hands. I had to admit that she was a good-looking woman, attractive in a forceful way. Spare features, but attractive with a good figure and long legs that would have been appreciated by any man.

"If you would wait for the other interviewees to pass through, I will be able to give you all an answer in the next hour," she said. "Please fill in this additional form while you are waiting," she said, as she gave me a paper.

I waited in the front reception, in the same seat as before and spent the next two hours sitting as still as possible while I appreciated every move of that attractive receptionist. I filled in the form she had handed me with my bank details, credit card numbers and personal information that was requested. I had noticed that there was a camera that monitored the reception and it did not seem too far-fetched that the behavior of all of the interviewees was being monitored by Ms. Severo from that monitor on her desk. She had kept her eye on the monitor the whole time during my interview and occasionally had made small notes on the list of interviewees.

At the end of the wait, the attractive receptionist picked up the phone and exchanged a few words before dismissing all of the other candidates by name and thanking them for attending. I had the job and I must say that I could not quite believe it. What quality had I shown that had decided the matter?

I was to find out.

Contract

“Alessandra, are we ready for the induction course? Is Andrea free?”

“Of course, the contract is prepared and Andrea is always available. The films have been made and are really a bit of an eye opener. Perhaps it might not be such a good idea to use Andrea, though?”

“No, I want him to be shocked and anyway the reaction will be fascinating. It will be a brief glance through the window! No, Andrea it is and we’ll test his patience to stretching point. I need a man with plenty of patience for the life that he is going to lead when he is prepared!”

“Fine then, we’ll draw him in like a fish on a line. First bewilder, then frighten and then the kill!”

“You take great pleasure in these little games, don’t you Alessandra?”

“It must be love!”

It was a week before I received the call that the contract was prepared and I should attend at ten in the morning to sign. I put on my best suit and tie and travelled to the Shard. I found that I was even more apprehensive than I had been when I first came for the interview. Suddenly it all seemed overwhelming and almost unreal, what had I signed myself up for?

Of course, I had not yet signed, but the decision had been made and soon I would be working for the formidable Ms. Severo!

I waited in reception for the human resources manager while the quiet bustle of the office carried on around me. The receptionist that I had admired just a week ago arrived and presented me to the man who ran the staffing of the financial business. He shook my hand and walked me to his office. In contrast to Ms. Severo’s office, it was a fish-bowl in modern style. All black leather, chrome and glass.

“Welcome on board,” he said in the way of a greeting as I sat while he shuffled his papers to eventually retrieve a densely written document of perhaps ten or eleven sides.

The front page had my name in capitals, the salary and the basic conditions written clearly. The whole was enclosed in a clear folder that made opening it difficult. He passed it to me and I hefted the huge document with almost shaking hands.

“It’s pretty formidable, a perfect example of what a room full of lawyers can work up when they of a mind to do so,” he said, with a smile. “What is important is that the name, address and salary, holidays and job title are correct. The rest contains two pages of secrecy, privacy and confidentiality agreements that you will sign. Then come the three sides that describe your

position and responsibilities in regard to the other employees and owners. The next five sides are your commitment to agree mobility on the company's terms, penalties of noncompliance to the contract, agreement to uniform should it be required as well as an obligation to be present at short notice in the event of your attendance be required by your superior. The last page is the acceptance of the company's arbitration procedure should there be any conflict regarding contractual compliance. You will of course sign every page with a full signature and a fingerprint and then later you will receive a copy for you to refer to."

I started to look at the pages of closely typed text and the manager started to show signs of impatience. So, I took my pen and signed every page where it was indicated, followed by the required fingerprint in each box at the bottom of each side.

When I was done, he smiled broadly and said, "Good, now you can begin the induction and preparatory orientation course. It will begin at six O'clock sharp tomorrow morning and normally takes three full days of eighteen hours a day. You will be present half an hour early, in suit and tie. All materials that are required will be provided by the company. A meal at twelve is supplied here and during the course and at work in general you are not allowed to carry a phone, pager or any recording device or camera. Make sure that you are on time."

I stuttered my thanks and left the offices in a daze.

Now I was really wondering, what I had let myself in for!

Induction

“Five mils of chloral hydrate during and after the films, that will leave him more open and less likely to challenge the film and the whole induction.”

“I don’t want him asleep, just suggestible.”

That’s no problem, it’s ideal for that. The only thing is to deliver it in a strong-tasting drink, something like orange juice for example.”

“Next up, what about the tattoos?”

“I have the stencils prepared, all I have to do is to get him to get close to asking and it is done. Bear in mind that when he leaves here, he will not be dosed anymore and may resist or run for cover.”

“I’ll take that risk, there are plenty more fish in the sea. Anyway, I’ll push there as well, so he’ll come running scared. He will be so tired and confused in the end that he will fall. It’s not a job, the contract is a red herring and all we have to do is to keep him coming back until he’s ready.”

“Well, it’s your show Ms. Severo, I just open the doors and enjoy your pleasure!”

“One day the company will supply you with a PA.”

I had somehow expected to be amongst my peers. That there would be others who also had to do the induction course and that there would be some sort of camaraderie and togetherness on the course. I thought that I would somehow have contact with staff and thus be able to gauge the temperature and working conditions in the company.

That’s what I thought! The reality was rather different and to put it mildly, strange.

On the day after I had signed the contracts, I arrived at the entrance of the Shard and stood waiting. Curiously enough, at ground level the land south of the City of London is low rise, Regency pubs, Victorian housing, railway stations from the age of steam and all pierced by the occasional huge modern concrete buildings that stand like sentinels. Of course, the Shard is on the south side of the river, so it is not quite so impressive. Even at five thirty there was movement. People hurrying to work and delivery lorries blocking the streets.

I waited until the doors were unlocked at quarter to six and took the lift to the fifteenth floor. I had expected the reception to be deserted and to have to wait around until eight to start the course, but the office was already fully operational. A different woman sat behind the reception desk, but she was cut from identical cloth to the one that I was familiar with. Moreover, she wore the same clothes and it was now plain that long hobble dresses, outrageously high heels and large breasts were all part of the company image.

The human resources man that I had met when signing the contract arrived and glanced at his watch.

“On time, good,” he said. “First you have to see the company induction films. They are in three parts of two hours each. Then you’ll be fed and watered and then it’s on to the psychological tests with our in-house psychologist, Dr. Kopfseher. Please follow me.”

Not even a coffee!

He took me down a number of long corridors and led me into a small room that seemed to be some sort of private meeting room. It had just two facing sofa’s and a low table and a beamer that projected its light on the wall. A woman was sitting on one of the sofas, she stood as we entered.

“This is Miss Andrea, she is in charge of the induction film,” said the personnel chief. “If you have any questions at the end of the film make sure that you write them down and you will later be presented an opportunity to ask them. At two, Andrea will be taking you for something to eat.”

He left the room and I waited for Andrea to tell me what to do. Instead, she made what seemed to be a small curtsy and turned out the light to leave us in total darkness. I found one of the sofas in the dark and sat, just as the first of the three films started to run.

Corporate films are boring. That is a given, they are presented by disembodied voices that twitter on with facts you need not know and images that could have been shot in the seventies. Then they try to hurrah you into a state of euphoria over companies that could be consigned to the deep without humanity ever noticing the lack.

This one was different.

Quite different. To start with there was no music, no disembodied voices and no sound at all. Just a camera that followed a pair of women’s high heels and feet as they walked into this familiar office. There was an almost hypnotic feel to it, as chatter could be heard in the distance, but not quite discerned. The shoes clicked and clacked their way around the office for perhaps twenty minutes until I was so familiar with their every detail. The way the nylons stretched and relaxed as the ankle moved. The slight flash of red as the sole in the arch was revealed at every small step. The way that the heel always contacted first and the long toes that were visible in the openings at the front of each shoe. I had never seen any woman who had grown her toenails so exotically long and they were slightly curled down and painted a scarlet that contrasted with the black of the shoe. The front seam of the nylons moved around them as the feet walked. Finally, there were the heels. A delicate reverse arch that plunged to vertical, changed to shining steel and then daggered the carpet with a single savage spike.

It was more than just a little arousing!

The camera followed those feet and I found that instead of being bored, I was almost fascinated by the rhythm and cadence of their movements. Finally, they came to rest, the woman sat and we were left with a view of those perfect feet dangling a single shoe from her toes. Then once again she was in movement and we were moving around the office in small slow steps. I tried to imagine the woman who was attached to the feet and ankles, but I could not imagine her. Was it that secretary that I had admired or perhaps my new boss?

Finally, it came to an end.

The light came on as Andrea stood and adjusted the beamer for the next film. Surreptitiously I looked at my watch and realized that I had been watching for two hours. I had seen nothing more than those feet, the black patent stilettos and nylons and for two hours! Where had the time gone? I glanced at Andrea and noted that she was fairly heavily made-up, wore rather smart but fusty styled clothes and seemed quite content to sit for hours and watch these strange movies without comment or even facial expression. There was something strange about her, something that I could not quite place.

When she had finished setting whatever it was that she had to set on the projector she opened a small side cupboard and offered me an orange juice with a small gesture and the bottle in her hand. No word was spoken by her. I was not at all thirsty and said so, but she poured the juice and placed a glass at hand for me. She switched off the lights and then made the first comment that she had spoken since I had entered the room.

“Please drink the juice!”

I looked at her and then the lights went out and the next film began. As it did so I heard the sound of Andrea making a small sigh and I guiltily lifted the glass and drank. I placed the glass on the table and watched as the screen gradually brightened until colors were discernible.

This time the film started with a slow throbbing music and a vague circling of colored lights that slowly resolved to show the receptionist that was so familiar to me from the day of the interview. For perhaps five minutes the focus gradually sharpened until I could see her as would anyone entering the office. The music faded, but it never really stopped, it just became part of a subtle ambience that filled the space in my head. I felt a little woozy, but relaxed and focused. The film followed her day. For a while she sat behind the desk of the reception before she got up to do a few small tasks. It was then that I realized that here was the woman from the first film. The shoes and toes were identical, her walk was well known to me, so I congratulated myself on making the connection. Wherever she went she was followed by a young man who carried all her files, opened the doors for her, pulled out her chair and then faded from view to be called whenever she had need of him. I watched all of this with a feeling of understanding. The woman was only a receptionist, but she was erotic femininity enshrined, she was like a goddess. How much higher in the scheme of things was Ms. Severo, the woman who was to become my boss? How much more deserving of utter obedience?

By the time that the second film finished I almost felt dizzy with the revelation that I had undergone. A pause on the road to Damascus, a crucial fork in my understanding of the world.

The light came on and Andrea once again pottered around. I wondered if it was wise to strike up a conversation, but decided that it might be considered impolite.

Now I realized what it was that was strange about her. She seemed almost over feminine, as though she was pretending every move in a studied way as a show for me, her only audience.

“Are you the training officer,” I ventured.

There was a small pause before she answered and she looked as though she was confused by the question.

“I am PA to Mrs. Davis,” she replied in a small voice. “She is one of the board, the CEO.”

Perhaps I could strike up a conversation with her, I thought to myself.

“Have you been working here long?” I asked.

“Four years.”

Now I knew what was strange. Andrea was a man! I felt a little strange, I had never met a cross dresser before. The realization must have been written in my face, because Andrea blushed and looked at the floor in what seemed to be shame.

“I don’t mind, really,” I said, feeling I had to say something.

“It’s for her,” said Andrea, “she has requirements that.”

“Oh,” I answered. I realized that she meant her boss, the CEO, Mrs. Davis, and I realized that I should have let Andrea finish her sentence.

“I just do as I am told,” she said.

I lifted my glass and sipped at the juice to cover the embarrassment. This was getting odder by the minute. One thing was certain; I would not work for Mrs. Davis at any salary!

After the brief embarrassed silence, the lights went out for the third film and I found that I was looking forward to seeing what it would contain. There was no doubt that so far, the whole experience had been, to say the least, unconventional. A shemale PA and films about feet! Nothing appeared on the screen, just a woman’s voice started to speak in a slow tone and a few musical notes played in the background of the sound of her cultured accent.

“Welcome to work here as an undersecretary in the Company of Coxtens Investments. Formerly Coxtens, William and Van Gaant, the company was finally bought out by the great granddaughter of Mary Coxten who was known as the Lady of Threadneedle Street in the years of Victoria’s reign. Now a modern and vitally alive business, we supply knowledge, investment opportunities and banking facilities to clients who need total discretion and privacy in their

dealings. We are the only company of our scale of market capitalization that exists in Great Britain in which all the upper tiers of direction and management are only taken by females. This gives us unique insight and an investment niche that more generalized firms struggle to penetrate. You will be working for this fascinating company in good company! Of course, the employment contracts are strictly enforced because of our need to protect client's interests, but they are also enforced without hesitation because this company believes that its employees are precious, valued, hardworking, honest and obedient. That they expect a good return on their investment in you goes without saying, that you are expected to give your time to the company is just and that you will be punished for the slightest contravention of your contract a given."

"You are here to serve," said the voice and I found myself nodding in agreement.

Slowly the screen glowed. By almost unnoticeable increments it brightened and focused as the speaker spoke on about the contract that I had signed and its importance, as well as the results of any part of it not being adhered to. Finally, the screen was following those feet around the office again. After the second film I now knew what was going on in the hazy and unfocused background of the film. There was that man who served her, he opened the doors and carried for her. That was the reception and now she was in the intimate office of Ms. Severo, the woman for whom I would soon be working. Finally, the voice faded, the warnings and rules were allowed to slip into a background mumble and the receptionist's feet made their way from the building. She stepped into a car and her feet disappeared into the darkness of the footwell. I enjoyed the sight of her slipping her hand down her ankle allowing the stiletto to loosen and massaging the soles of her feet with her manicured fingers. That was where the film faded out and I was just left with that background mumble that was barely comprehensible. It ran another few minutes and the film was at an end.

I felt curiously lightened, as if I longed to be taken in hand.

When the light came on Andrea looked at me for a moment and then glanced down to my waist with a small smile. I looked down too and suddenly noticed that an erection was tenting my pants. I was so embarrassed, but she took no notice of it and just fiddled with the projector as she worked.

When I looked up, I realized that Andrea might be a man, but her breasts were real and her movements suggested a femininity that went beyond mere playacting.

Another revelation.

I looked at my watch and realized that the time was two O'clock. I had just spent six hours watching those films and though it had not seemed that there was much content in them, somehow, I understood that my job was folded into the narrative in some subtle and deep way.

Ten minutes later I was in the staff canteen for the promised meal. Andrea was petite and attractive, though she did not seem to fit the pattern of the other woman that I had seen so far. They all wore straight lined suits, power dressing even when it was sexually orientated like the receptionist's uniform. Andrea on the other hand was dressed in frills, lace and wisps that made

her seem almost like a heavily made-up little girl. In the canteen she picked up a menu and so did I. A couple of waiters approached and took our orders for drinks while I looked at the menu. Never in my life had I ever imagined that a company would offer its staff a canteen that could have been a top-class restaurant even in the City of London.

I looked down the items on offer, a good selection of piadini, snacks and also pasta and traditional dishes that all looked pretty good. It was then that I noticed that my menu was tinged with a subtle hint of blue and Andrea's was slightly pink. She had laid it on the table and I was able to see that where I had pork chops, she had steak listed and where my menu offered tuna hers offered salmon or lobster. She looked up at me and smiled.

"You cannot order from my menu," she said, that was all.

Despite the fact that a moment ago the selection had seemed excellent, now it seemed substandard. My delicious cheddar and blue cheese omelet that came with a rocket salad and feta cheese was overshadowed by Andrea's Fillet Mignon with butterscotch parsnip and wild rice scattered wild forest black truffles, fresh ground red-green pepper and toasted parmesan.

We ate in silence as I looked around to notice that there were just three men eating and perhaps fifteen or twenty women. The men were quiet and concentrated on their food, the women were expansive, drank red wine and chattered while they ate. Finally, the meal was over. I enjoyed the small slice of nut cake but envied Andrea her re-toasted cinnamon and hazelnut pancakes served with a dollop of fresh cream that had been whipped together with Maple syrup.

I think that you are starting to understand by now, I was well treated, so far, but all animals were not equal on this farm, some were more equal than others.

The psychological testing turned out to be a thorough going medical followed by a session with a woman who bored into me with her eyes and words until I felt as though I was an insect pinned to a board or a frog cut for dissection. The medical was done by a female doctor and began with the usual measurements of blood pressure and so on, before and after strenuous exercise that was done on a machine like a small escalator. Finally, she was satisfied and told me to strip. When I left my underpants on, she gave me a rather superior look and told me 'not to be silly' and strip off as ordered. I did so and wondered if a woman had to suffer these indignities when she started work at this company. She inspected me intimately and I had to imagine a great deal of dirty washing to control my body's urge to get erect.

"Do you have problems getting an erection?" she asked.

"No, not normally," I replied.

"Tsk, ts," she tutted and then asked me to bend down and touch my toes.

The thermometer was cold and somewhat larger than I expected and then she followed it up with a quick probe with her gloved finger.

“Mm, good. No prostate problems,” she said, “however, I am going to send you to our salon for some treatment, make sure that you arrive before your course begins tomorrow.”

“How much earlier?” I asked.

“An hour will do!”

“The building does not unlock until far later,” I said.

“Wait by the main door,” was her reply.

She inspected me and tutted. “You really need to get fit, young man,” she said, as she weighed me. “It can wait for the moment, but I think that you will find that Ms. Severo will more than insist.”

I slowly got dressed and decided that despite her forthright and almost detached attitude the young doctor was attractive. I sized her up and she noticed with a small smile.

“I think that you really do not have any erectile dysfunction and I would say that you are of adequate size,” she laughed. I looked down to see my pants tenting and shrugged. What else was there to do?

The psychologist was also a disturbing part of the induction. Most people know all about that couch thing and that their mother is the root of all sexual problems or is it their father? I found this woman was more than expert. Within just fifteen minutes I was telling her my every thought, about the short affair that I had had with a piano teacher who took advantage of me to serve her and learn oral tunes that could not be played on the piano. She analyzed my feelings about women, their bodies, their attitudes, sexual needs and my reactions to all of this.

We discussed the films that I had seen and she seemed pleased that I had found them interesting. I admitted that I had a stash of porn on the computer laptop at home and that I found Ms. Severo intimidating.

“She is demanding,” said the psychologist, as she offered me an orange juice.

She probed me about friends, contacts, family and social networks and I found myself a fountain of information that babbled from my mouth like a brook. I could not help myself, she was everything that I wanted in a woman. Rounded figure, pretty in a mature way, friendly and seemingly open. When my eyes fastened on her breasts that were slightly exposed, I could not help myself from falling for her.

“My dear Floriana,” she said. “It would not be a good idea if we met out of work!” “Why not, surely it’s not banned?”

“It is absolutely banned and the penalties for you would be strict.”

“But, not for you,” I asked.

“No, of course not. I do not need to apply for permission to start a relationship.”

“Oh!” was all I could think of to answer.

“Read your contract, Floriana, read it and learn something. Anyway, there are other reasons as well,” she added.

“Like?”

“I really think that we are digressing here, Floriana. Let’s move back to that piano teacher of yours.”

And so it went. She picked me apart and knew every one of my secrets. I even gave her the code words that I always use on the computer and wanted to give her the keys to my heart. She took everything and gave nothing. I never even learned her name or who she was at all.

By the time that I had finished all this medical stuff it was after eleven at night. I had spent five hours just in the psychology debriefing and well over two hours being measured up by the doctor. I finally left the building, shattered, to hurry home, sleep five hours and then head back to be in time to attend the ‘salon’ that I had been ordered to visit.

I stood in the dawn light, yawning and sipping the coffee that I had grabbed on the way. I knew that it would be all that I would have until two in the afternoon. As I approached the shuttered doors of the entrance, they slowly lifted and I was invited in by a woman in a white nurse’s housecoat.

“Good Morning, Floriana,” she said. “I have been asked by the doctor to sort out a few minor problems. I have her prescription. Would you please follow me?”

I followed her into the lift, where she inserted a key that allowed her to exit on the fifteenth floor as usual, but the lift doors opened at the back of the lift taking us into what appeared to be a huge facility that had hairdressing, massage salon as well as plenty of doors that hid whatever they offered behind plain cover.

The masseuse led me to a room where a single leather topped table beckoned and I stripped and lay down facing downwards. She oiled her hands and started work on my back while I wondered what it was that I was here for. A massage did not seem to be at the root of the ‘problem’ that the doctor had sent me here, but by now I knew that I should just let it all happen and not worry about the consequences.

Finally, she was finished and she asked me to flip over onto my back. I did as she asked and carefully kept the towel draped over me.

When she turned back, she laughed and said, “towel off, please. That’s the next bit! You seem a

little dehydrated, drink this.” I took the grapefruit juice and drank it in one swallow.

I suddenly thought that she wanted sex and somehow it all fitted in with the doctor’s questions about erections. I shifted and the towel dropped to reveal my hardening prick standing like the Shard stands over the City. In her hands were what appeared to be tatters of cloth or paper and she slapped them from my navel to my balls and then into the crack of my arse. Too late I realized what they were and tried to move. But she was strong and she easily held me down while she prepared to wax me.

“Please no,” I said, in a funk.

“You thought that I wanted to fuck you, didn’t you?” she laughed as she brought other strips and covered my arms and legs with a ruthless attention to detail.

“Erm, no,” I lied, but it was clear that the fib was not going to survive longer than it took to say it.

“Tsk, tsk,” she said, as she started the painful process of waxing. “Let’s get it all off.”

With a sweep of her arm, she stripped my lower leg and held the strip up for inspection. My yell came a second later and she chuckled.

“I love being waxed,” she said, as she ran her hand over my left leg. “Smooth, soft and so sensitive. Don’t worry, the more often you do it the more the hair fades until at last you end up smooth and feminine all the time.”

One by one she stripped the papers from me with strong sweeps of her hands that were accompanied by the rasping sound of hair being torn from the skin by main force. The last strip that she tore from me was the one that she had buried in the crack of my ass.

“This is the one the doctor ordered,” said the masseuse as she ripped the hair from my ass with a pain that was almost indescribable. A Chinese burn combined with the feeling that I was being skinned alive.

“Perfect, Brazilian,” she said, as she wiped her hands. “Now we follow with some balm that soothes and cools all the while removing those last few hairs that stubbornly resist the wax.”

She massaged on the cream and it was as she had promised. Soothing and pleasant.

“Now I really could fuck you,” she said, “if of course I did not want to keep my job. Then there’s the little matter that I prefer women in my bed, but now that you are nice and smooth, you’re half way there, anyway aren’t you? Funny that you’ve got no tattoos or piercings at all!” “Don’t really like them!” I said, just before yawning.

“What if I were to give you a small tattoo or piercing, would you like that?”

I looked up at her and smiled. Her hands closed over her chest and she said, "I'll tell you what, you get to see my tattoo and I'll give you a nice little pattern on your shoulder. How about that? I know that Ms. Severo likes tats, so I am sure that you will benefit from it."

I agreed and expected that she would open that white coat and reveal some delicious pierced nipples and perhaps some erotic tattoo on her breasts, but she opened her coat lower down and showed me the tiny ring in her navel and the flower that was tattooed around it.

"Now let me think of a nice pattern," she said, as she pottered around out of sight of me.

I was nodding off with her chit chat, the sweeps of her hands and the herbal smells of the cream until I finally fell asleep as my body tried to catch up a little with last night's short slumber. I think I felt her injecting me in the shoulder; in fact, I am sure because I cannot believe that I willingly slept through what happened next.

I woke up to find that I was tucked up in what looked to be a hospital bed in a white room with the masseuse looking down at me with a small sly smile on her lips.

"I have spoken to Ms. Severo and she has told me to inform you that you may go home now. "Please do not touch the bandage on your arm. Tomorrow I think that it can come off and you can admire the tattoo and I can check that it is OK."

I felt my arm and sure enough there was a bandage on my arm.

"Did you really tattoo me?"

"Perfectly," said the masseuse. "I am a girl of many talents and this is one of the best I've ever done. Ms. Severo picked the pattern herself and it is a good sign that she decided that you can take the rest of the day off. She's not usually so forthcoming!"

"I remember."

"You asked me to do it," she said. "I would never take a liberty like that. On the other hand, it is in your contract and so it was going to get done sooner or later anyway!"

"What?"

"Another man that doesn't bother to read what he signs," she chuckled.

So, I staggered from the bed and got dressed. I was still woozy, but when I looked at my watch, I realized that it was already four in the afternoon.

"I've been told to inform you to be here at six precisely and we'll take a look at my artistic work," she said.

"Six?"

“Six, and then at eight you have a meeting booked with Ms. Severo and after that, I believe that you will be taken by Andrea to see some more introductory films.”

I wandered into the street, still in a bit of a daze. Throngs of workers in suits were heading home, the rush hour had begun. By the time that I got home I was so very tired, but felt much better except for the ache in my shoulder. For half an hour I considered undoing the bandage and taking a look at the ‘artwork’ but when I checked it in the mirror, I noticed that the white crepe bandage had been sewn on with a red thread that I would be totally unable to replace. So, in the end I left it for the next day and went to bed.

No point in getting in trouble!

I woke with such a headache it only receded by the time that I arrived at work. It’s a strange thing but I was so involved in this odd process that I failed to reflect on the strange route that it seemed that I was being dragged down. The company was like none that I had ever experienced, but in the end, I was so focused on the fact that they were paying so much that I completely failed to see how strangeness might end as being re-educated until I was no longer Kelly, but had become the Floriana that they seemed to want!

I entered as before and followed the smiling masseuse to her lair. She carefully stripped off my shirt and then laid me on her bench face down.

“Now, let’s see what we have here,” she said, as she started to undo the bandage. “Good, you were not tempted to remove it, that would have resulted in...”

She left the sentence unfinished, but I had the distinct impression that the word that she had wanted to finish with was ‘punishment’ or at the very least, ‘repercussions’.

“Did I really ask for it?” I said, needing some sort of reassurance from her that I had been willing.

“You certainly did, but you left it to me to decide,” she said. “I was considering something nice on your pretty ass or somewhere more intimate,” she continued as she rolled the bandage slowly from my arm. “But in the end, it had to be the shoulder. It’s always a good place to start and you weren’t waxed there!”

The bandage was off and I moved to look, but her hand stayed me.

“Wait a moment, I need to clean it up a little,” she said.

I felt cool alcohol being swabbed and then she slowly massaged the skin. Finally, she stood back and photographed her work. The first I knew was the flash of the camera!

“I’ll just get a mirror.”

I looked round to see her with a hairdresser's mirror that focused on a familiar pattern that she had impressed onto my shoulder. There, still raw and slightly swollen was the company mark! The symbol, familiar from the company's letterhead with a small barcode below just above the name of my new boss, Ms. D. C. Severo!

I am not sure what I had expected. Perhaps a naked woman, a lion or some other animal, a dolphin or perhaps a flower. Maybe even a Chinese symbol, but there it was, five inches wide and six tall, the imprint of the company that I had only worked for a couple of days, imprinted permanently on my skin.

Dazed, almost in shock, I looked at it, stared, hoping that it would fade before my eyes. Like a label of ownership, a mark of belonging, I had been branded as property.

"Like it?" she asked.

I could not honestly say 'yes', but it was clear from her expression that she expected delight. I was about to answer her when her phone rang and she picked up the call.

"That was Ms. Severo," she said. "I posted the photo to her. She loves it and is concerned that you love it too."

I thought of the woman whom I would have to work for and nodded slowly.

"It's perfect," I said. "You did a great job!"

A smile spread on her pretty face, it looked less like happiness than satisfaction.

"Ms. Severo told me that she would like me to book you in for another, perhaps tomorrow morning. Will that be OK for you?"

I nodded.

"Excellent," she said, with a small laugh. "I love this part of my work. It's so satisfying to be able to leave my mark."

"I have a question," I said.

"Fire away!"

"Am I the first to be marked with the company logo?"

"Of course not! All the men who work here ask for it in the first week or two, even one or two of the women."

"Ah," I breathed, "and what is the barcode? What does it mean?"

“In an hour you have a meeting with Ms. Severo,” she said. “Ask her!”

The next hour was, I have to admit it, a pleasure! I lay there, passively, as my masseuse gave me a massage that seemed to undo every knot of tension from my body. As I lay, I could feel my cock responding to her hands, but she never got intimate and I was able to conceal the erection under my body. Half in a doze, I imagined her as a girlfriend, a partner and the worries about the tattoo faded a little and no longer filled my conscious thoughts. All too soon the hour was over and I got dressed.

“Make sure that you report to me tomorrow at six,” she said. “I’ll get the other one done and then you’ll be perfect!”

“Other one?”

“You asked for it!”

“At six?” I asked. “Why so early?”

“Because you have a very busy day tomorrow, of course!”

Refreshed from the massage and wondering about tomorrow, I made my way to my boss’s office and knocked lightly on the door. “Come!”

The voice was Ms. Severo and I opened the door to find her alone and sitting behind her huge desk.

“I am hearing good things about you,” she said, in a friendly tone. “I just thought that we should have a small chat so I can make my own assessment.”

I waited, there had been no question and she had not asked me to sit.

“Good, you are learning,” she said. “Sit and tell me what you think of us!”

I sat on the proffered chair and winced slightly at the soreness of the tattoo rasping on my shirt.

“I know,” she said, “they always itch when they are new. In a couple of days, you will not notice the soreness.”

“I have to admit that I find it strange here,” I began.

I was trying to pick my words carefully, but I was difficult to be full of praise for this strange company. She waited for me to continue.

“The induction has been interesting so far,” I said, thinking of the films that I had been required to watch. “I’m not sure where it is leading and what it has to do exactly with my job.”

“Mm, have a little faith! We believe that the people that work for us should be totally integrated in the firm. They are our most important asset and as such must be shaped to serve the company and the directors fully and without reserve. When you are fully prepared you will find that life will be so simple if you just obey every command and serve in the role for which you are being prepared. Consider some of the coming hurdles as obstacles to be overcome to create the perfect personal assistant for me and those that I allow to use your services.”

“But, would it not be better if I knew the goals of this induction,” I said.

Ms. Severo held up her hand lightly to stop me in full flow.

“I did not ask a question,” she reminded me. “But I shall answer your enquiry nevertheless! I know where I want you, I know where you are going and I also know what is best for you. Enough to say that I am determined that you are going to be a far better trained assistant than the man who previously held the post and I am allowed to decide how I am going to achieve this.”

I nodded and wondered what was next. What I did know was that I dared not ask about the bar code that had been tattooed onto my arm below the logo of the company.

“I would like to see the tattoo now,” she said. “Remove your shirt so that I can inspect the work.”

When the tattoo was revealed she softly touched the sore skin and chuckled to herself.

“It’s perfect,” she said. “I am so glad that I asked my name to be added, it adds that personal touch. You can dress now and report to reception for further induction.

I left her office and reported to the receptionist. From there I was led to the small video viewing room. My mind was full of questions that I dared not ask and slowly I was wondering if this was worth what had seemed at first to be a perfect job.

The same girl was there in the room waiting for me and without comment she followed the same procedure as two days before. In fact, it was exactly the same because I sat through the six hours of films that were exactly the same ones that I had seen the day before with the bitter taste of the grapefruit juice that had been my only breakfast.

I found myself wondering how it was that I found the film of the walking woman so interesting and a couple of times found with amazement that I was becoming erect at the thought of the woman whose day I was following from floor level.

At last, it was over, and we went to the canteen to eat again. Once again, I noticed the difference in the menus and the differences between the behavior of the men and women who were relaxing in the canteen. At three O’clock I was taken to be fitted with a uniform.

It was strange because I did not see what it would look like, I just experienced being measured, probed and poked by the elderly woman who fussed around with tape measure and pieces of cord. It took well over an hour to complete the process and I found that I was developing an

inability to ask questions. I had not dared ask the film girl, Andrea, and the same was the case as I was measured and posed while the woman noted every detail in a small notebook.

The final part of the day's induction was my introduction to the gym. The man who was in charge of me went over the exercise machines and weights and then spent half an hour putting together a course of training that would take up two hours of every working day! That I was going to be paid to exercise also seemed strange, but on the other hand it seemed positive that the company took such pains to ensure my good health!

I left the Shard feeling tired and physically drained, but seeing the film again had sort of made sense. It seemed as though they were deliberately trying to grind me down physically. All I could do each evening was clamber into bed, and drop off to sleep in an exhausted haze.

That night I started to dream of work. The films had affected me deeply and I found myself dreaming one of those strange 'I am in trouble but I cannot move' type dreams that are the worst of nightmares. All I could remember, when I woke up, was that a heel had been about to crush me, but how that came about in the dream I cannot say.

I woke to the bell on my front door and staggered to answer it as I pulled on a pair of jeans. Glancing at my watch I realized that it was almost midnight, I had barely managed three hours and someone was ringing on the bell. I opened the door just a little to find the woman who lived upstairs standing and looking very concerned. I rarely saw Marcia Stevens because she worked nights in some call center or other, but she was standing looking a bit worried. Both front doors stood next to each other in the converted house.

"I saw a man crawling through the back garden," she said, with a shaky voice.

I told her not to worry and that I would check it out but she seemed so very upset and declared that she could not possibly go back into her flat upstairs until I had checked that the man had not climbed into her apartment!

I allowed her in and closed the door before staggering into the back garden and struggling through the bushes. It took about ten minutes to do an inspection of every nook and cranny. There was no one there. I checked every bush again and then headed back to my apartment where Marcia was waiting for me with fear written all over her face.

"It's OK," I said, "no one there."

I led my neighbor to the front of my apartment and went to shake her hand as she opened her door and she grabbed me and planted a big 'thank you' kiss smack on my lips. I hugged her a moment and then went back to bed with a yawn.

Marcia was single, bored, lonely and doubtless so very needy. She was not the type of woman that I was interested in. Pleasant she was, attractive, not really!

Interned

“Margot, look at this! This is what I need to put the fear of God in him!”

“Who is he kissing?”

“Who cares, it’s not his sister!”

“I heard that you managed to get the company logo on him, nice work, Davina! Just a couple of days and he’s losing his mind!”

“Well, that’s not all, he’s booked again for today for more. The way that I see it I’ll just pile on the pressure until he snaps in my hands. Then, forget the job, forget the social niceties, I’ll uproot him and let Alessandra get her claws into him. He’ll be so sexually charged and desperate that he’ll slip down the slope and be mine!”

“You know that you’ll have to make him disappear?”

“It’s all sorted, Margot. I have a little plan to focus him all the better on my needs, a little twist if you like!”

“Sounds fascinating, I’m looking forward to your finishing moves of the game.”

“If it’s a game, then it’s ‘blind man’s bluff!’”

“And I thought that making a sissy of Andrea was so perfect!”

“Ah, but it took months and you started with Alessandra’s bisexual brother, Andrew, this is fast and a total perversion of an everyday man off the street.”

“Don’t make me jealous!”

Dog tired and in a daze, I arrived at work to be faced with my favorite tattooist and masseuse having another stab at labelling me. I started to worry that I was getting in too deep, but in the end, I must admit that I was starting to feel an attraction for this strange company.

It was full of exotic and interesting women! That was certainly a positive point. They paid well and looked after their personnel. It was just that they had such a strange way of talking, of operating and then there were all the differences in the way that the female and male parts of the workforce were treated. They were the first firm that I had ever heard of that discriminated against the men!

Once again, I found myself on that soft topped bench. I could hear the hum of the tattooist’s needle as she worked on the soft skin on my groin. I had tried to argue with her and suggested

that there must be other places where she could place the second tattoo that Ms. Severo wanted, but she insisted and I could not dissuade her.

As she worked, she licked her lips in concentration and inside an hour it was finished. I looked down as she placed the gauze over the tattoo, but with all the blood and some of the ink I did not get a glimpse before it was covered in a bandage.

“This one is a little more sensitive,” she said. “The bandage stays on a day or two and then you come back to me here.”

“On Sunday,” I said.

“Why not? We’re both working then.”

“Oh!”

From there, I was called up to Ms. Severo’s office where I stood waiting for two hours outside her door. It is difficult to stand still for hours at a time. For a while thoughts pass and flutter and then the boredom sets in. As a child I was sent to a Quaker school. Great emphasis is laid on self-control and being quiet. It stood me in good stead, that training. I watched the women saunter through the corridor outside Ms. Severo’s office and speculated on who they were and how they had risen in this strange company. The men always hurried. Never running, but always in movement and always carrying out menial tasks. It seemed to me that the only male manager of any authority was the personnel manager, but even he had lower status. After all he seemed to be the only senior member of staff who occupied an office that had no privacy.

The hours passed and I stood waiting.

At last, the door to the office opened and Ms. Severo emerged with another woman in tow. She glanced at me and continued her conversation.

“So, we’ll make it Monday to start investing in those vulnerable stocks, wait until the rush is over and the market is saturated and then begin to sell short on the basis of a four-week turnaround with no more than ten per cent of the fund, the stock should waver and that’s when we’ll release the funds and buy as much as we can at ten dollars or less.”

The other woman nodded and walked away to leave Ms. Severo standing before me. She had a severe look on her face and seemed rather displeased.

“What are we going to do with Floriana?” she said, rhetorically.

I stayed silent. It did not seem like a question that I should answer.

“I remember distinctly asking you during the interview several important questions that you answered quite directly. Now it seems that I have caught you lying and I must say that I am not very happy at all. In fact, I am severely displeased with you, especially after all the progress that

you seemed to be making to prepare you as my personal assistant!”

I wondered what I had lied about. I could not think of anything at all that I had been dishonest about.

“This morning I was informed that you in fact have a girlfriend, lover whatever, and yet you quite definitely told me that the opposite was true!” she said. “Perhaps you can explain this?”

She drew a photo from her pocket and held it for me to see.

“That is my neighbor, Marcia,” I said. “She is not a girlfriend!”

“Well, that kiss does not look like it. Are you so free with all your neighbors?”

“Last night she thought she saw someone in the shared garden and...”

“There is no excuse,” said Ms. Severo, as she put the photo back in her pocket. “You belong to this company now. In fact, I take it quite personally because you now have the honor of bearing my name embossed on you. I shall now make it quite clear. Every move you make is watched, every kiss, every touch and everywhere that you go, the company is watching you. I am watching you! This is quite clearly written in the contract that you signed.”

“But...”

“I don’t recall asking you a question! I have taken a decision, that this woman,” she patted the pocket where the photo was tucked, “will be sacked from her job for dishonesty, and find the police at her door, do not go down the same path, young man. What’s more, do not speak when it is not expressly required, Floriana! I think that it is time that you went through the final part of your induction and then we shall think about finding you accommodation that better suits my needs. When that is complete you will begin on a reduced salary. Consider it to be a small punishment for your carelessness and make sure that, in future, you better meet my high expectations of your behavior. Do you understand?”

“Yes...”

I had meant to say more, but she broke in and gave me her orders.

“A ‘yes’ is quite sufficient! Report to the personnel manager and tell him, from me, that the ‘private life’ induction is to be completed by this evening. He will lead you through the process and allow you to go home early. You will not speak to anyone outside of this building about your job, you will not have any physical contact unless it is approved by me explicitly and you will report here at seven tomorrow where you will wait outside my office for further use! I think that that is sufficiently clear for you to understand, do not walk from my path!”

I nodded and went to the office of the personnel manager with confusion in my mind. I decided that I would get a copy of the contract that I had signed and read it through. It seemed that this

company and the contract were rather more inflexible than I had thought. Perhaps I should pack it in and leave? They were choking me and I had to escape before I was completely drowned in their rules and regulations.

“Ah, good, everything is prepared to sign,” said the personnel manager when I told him, word for word, what Ms. Severo had ordered. “I’ll just get your file.”

He pulled a massive file from a cabinet and flicked through it.

“First, we open an account in our private bank for you. This is where your salary will be paid every six months.”

“Six months?” I asked.

“That’s right, please sign here.”

He pointed at the form on the top that would transfer all of my bank accounts, credit cards and savings to the company private bank.

“Why?”

You sign to finalize permission. Actually, all the transfers have been done anyway, but we like to do things properly and your signature is a part of that process.”

“I meant, why do I have to open an account here?” “Because that’s the way that it’s done,” he said.

I took the offered pen and signed. Then he flicked the bottom of the page and asked me to sign again.

“What is this for?”

“This is the company-specific mandate.”

I signed.

“From now on, if you need to withdraw cash, make a payment or buy anything or transfer funds then you will need the counter-signature of Ms. Severo personally on the docket as the account has been registered as an employee account.”

“Pardon?”

“Only cheques and transfers with her signatures are valid,” I don’t think that I can express it any more clearly! Now you may leave and finish early.”

“I would like a copy of my contract please.”

Finally, I had screwed up enough courage to get a copy.

“A notarized copy has been posted to you at home; it will arrive in the next day or two. Make sure that you place it somewhere safe and read it thoroughly. One of the conditions of your bonuses is that you can recite it by heart, so I suggest that you put aside some of your free time to study it carefully!”

All I could do was nod before I turned and left.

Somehow, I was being wound in like a fish on a line. Every day that passed saw me more bound to the company and Ms. Severo. Every day the price of leaving was higher and the wall around me more impenetrable. If I wanted to leave now, I would have to go to my bank and stop those transfers, I would have to dip into my savings, the fifty thousand that I had from the house when my parents had died. I saw dimly that I would need lawyers to get out of the contract that I had blindly signed and that would cost a fortune.

Surely a company cannot own me, cannot dictate my private life and spy on me? /Surely not,’ was my thinking.

I arrived in my street in a depressed daze, to find a police car parked outside the house where I rented my apartment. I stood, a good hundred yards from my own front door and did not dare enter. As I stood considering I saw that two policemen were waiting at my door and I wondered what was going on.

I was soon to be enlightened.

Marcia, my neighbor, the woman who had been photographed kissing me the previous night was led to the car. Her face was pure fright and tears streamed down her face as they pushed her into the car and drove off. Then I remembered the words of Ms. Severo and felt my heart sink to new depths. She and I were both being punished for a sin against my new employer! She, totally unknowingly whereas I knew and could only cower as Ms. Severo’s dominance was asserted by the authorities.

As I watched the car speed away, I slowly realized that this was an object lesson from my new boss. A proof positive that she could do whatever she wanted. The arrest of my poor neighbor had been timed for my arrival. I was supposed to see Ms. Severo’s power in action and thus realize that resistance was futile, in fact that any attempt to escape her grip was liable to be pure fantasy. I could find myself in that police car or perhaps far worse. There was to be no recourse even to the laws of the land. It did not matter what was written in that contract, no matter how outrageous the conditions, I would be bound by them and forced to comply or have my whole life ruined forever.

With head hanging in despair, I stumbled into my apartment to find a large grey envelope lying on the mat with two other letters. The mark on the back of the big envelope was the same as the one that now adorned my shoulder! Coxtens. I laid it on the kitchen table and looked at my

watch. It was too late to get to the bank so I opened my laptop and logged into my accounts by Internet. It took so long to open the webpage that I worked into a sweat as I watched the thing green line try to reach the end of its course.

Finally, the log on was complete. Where normally a list of accounts and credit cards were listed was nothing. No accounts and no credit cards, what was more, all the usual payees that I paid with the accounts were also gone. There just sat an advertisement from the bank that informed me that using their bank was 'For life's voyage'. I sat back on the chair and then reached for the small note book where I keep all my Internet passwords.

This time the log-in took moments and revealed that my 'Platinum' savings account held the grand sum of ten pounds. Frantically, I checked the movements in the account. A single withdrawal today at two, thirty-seven of fifty-five thousand pounds, sent to account number S00038687 of Coxtens Bank, in the name of D.C. Severo and F. O'Connell. By that last entry of balance was a small ACP in red. I looked through the page and found a list of the codes. It signified account closure process and knew that I was now in too deep to retreat. I could complain all I liked, but the bank would find that it had all been regular, and that I had moved the money to an account of the same name and that they had followed procedure. Their answer would be, speak to Coxtens.

I don't think that I moved from the spot for ten minutes as my mind fluttered, I wondered if that was all it was. The chance of fleecing marks, the stealing of money, but somehow, I was sure that there was more to it than that. There had to be! No company sets up offices in the Shard for four hundred pounds a square yard and then steals fifty thousand!

At last, I regarded the letters that lay on the table. The first was from my book club offering me half price books if I retracted my cancellation. I had not cancelled my book club... The second was from the landlord informing me that he had decided to sell the house and that meant that under my contract as a furnished flat I had four weeks to find other accommodation and the third, well the third was from my employer.

I opened the envelope and pulled out the document that had been sent to me without a covering letter. It was a copy the contract of employment that I had signed. A dense ten pages or more of tiny printed script that made my eyes strain.

Just the nondisclosure agreement was two sides of closely written script, the salary section was half a page long and had so many 'ifs', 'buts' and double and treble negatives that it was impossible to follow. At the bottom of each sheet was my signature and a fingerprint in a small box on both sides of the page. It was going to take a week to even read through this monster, never mind understand it. I rubbed my eyes and staggered to bed.

Somehow, I would have to escape this mess... it was just that I could not see how I was going to!

Realignment

“Is the room ready, because it will take a week to have mine fitted. I know that you haven’t got anyone in there at the moment, but can I use it immediately?”

“I had it cleaned up yesterday, the chair of punishment is still there, fetters and all.”

“And the cot?”

“Of course! Does that mean that you are going to finish his hopes of the job today?”

“Well, I can’t immediately close the door, but yes, today is the day when the job turns inside out and he becomes my little pet. He will be so dizzy and I can relocate and leash him today as long as you are ready.”

“Actually, I’m looking forward to being a strict teacher to him. I just love these little games! Will you be coming around later then?”

“I have the cheque, the bank accounts are actually deleted already, but the cheque is his personal signal that he is worthless.”

“Worthless. That’s priceless perhaps?”

I arrived at the Shard somewhat worse for wear. I had slept poorly now for days. I was physically exhausted and at the limits of my stamina. I left the house unshaven, but did not even realize until I was on the up escalator at London Bridge underground station.

It was all a nightmare, people hurrying to their offices and jobs all around me. They all hated their work, despised the companies, hated the boss and disliked the terrible commute, but in the end, they had a life, they had time to spend and they had choices to make. I was in a tube, a tunnel that had no light in it at all. I was heading for the grating that would grind me to pieces and I could not find a way to stop it.

It never occurred to me to jump the train. Disappear and escape my fate. Give up everything, but my mind, and slip away. I was so rooted in the here and now, the job that was no job, the pattern of living that I understood, that I could not escape. I had to pass through the grating. I understand that now! I am grateful for what Coxtens has done to me, made of me and I understand that they had to bend me like that to work that magic, but then, then I was a shell that needed to be filled to the brim and they had emptied me to do it.

I waited by that door and watched the office pass by. Occasionally an eyebrow was raised by one of the women who seemed to be in charge. Hips swayed, heels gouged the carpet and breasts moved under thin silk, but none of them was Ms. Severo. I had not changed clothes since yesterday, I had been far too preoccupied to even think about it so when I started to itch, I was

almost surprised to remember that another mark on my flesh needed treatment.

I stood, I hoped and I despaired.

The receptionist passed me by and entered the room. As she left again, five minutes later, she gave me a smile and said, “Ms. Severo will see you now Floriana. Straighten that tie!”

My hand went up and I pulled the knot tight before stepping in to the office in which I was soon to spend most of my life.

“Floriana,” said Ms. Severo. “Today you are going to start work for me, the induction is finished with. I have decided on a number of minor points that I’m sure that you are in agreement with me on.”

She stood up from her desk and I saw that she was casually dressed. Jeans and heels, thin sweater and a little jewelry. She walked over to me and walked around me as if viewing an exhibit in an art show.

“You are not properly dressed,” she said. “I expect more! I shall take it into account that you arrived in this state for work. On the other hand, I think that a uniform will ensure that you are better presented in future. Now let’s get the trivial things out of the way and then I shall get Alexandra to take you under her wing for a week before you start in my office as factotum.”

She stopped in front of me and I could not help dropping my eyes when she looked into my eyes. In her high, high heels she was inches taller than me and I looked down to see that she was wearing open toes shoes in which the long nails curved down from her toes in the stockings that she appeared to be wearing under her jeans.

I was instantly reminded of the films that I had now seen twice and I had a sudden compulsive thought to kneel to see if the world seen from her feet was like the film. To see the world through the arch of her heels, to kiss those toes...

“Your salary is fixed at ten thousand a year because of your disrespect and inability to follow your contract. This will be the case until you have completed three months where it will be reassessed by your superior at her discretion. You will be uniformed the whole time that you are in the office. I plan to relocate you for my convenience to a new apartment that has become available. You will move in this evening. You will be taken there.”

“I would suggest that you do not return to your old address, that would show signs of dissatisfaction that I would interpret as disobedience. I intend to have your new apartment decorated tastefully, I think that you will settle in well, the apartment is located just around the corner and belongs to a good friend of mine.”

Her finger lifted my chin until she was looking into my eyes.

“You will go down to the massage parlor and clean-up. I shall come down in half an hour to

inspect you and then you will report to the reception where Alexandra is awaiting your arrival.”

The masseuse greeted me and inspected my shoulder before carefully removing the bandage that covered my new insignia. I looked down and realized that I had been trademarked exclusive by my controlling boss. Her name stood large in capitals across my soft and waxed skin. Above that was the simple phrase ‘Property of’. The implication was just an affirmation of that which I already had started to appreciate. I was being prepared for something that had been planned from the start, I was being smoothed down, polished and trained to be Ms. Davina Carina Severo’s, her property, her gofer, slave, her personal pet.

“It’s perfect,” said the masseuse with a small grin. “You know that you are so lucky to have that name on you and not the name of the chief executive officer’s. Margot is a real sadist; she gets through personal assistants at the rate of one every six months.”

I sat there with this pretty young girl, the one that had tattooed me intimately, who had waxed me and massaged me opened the door a crack so that I could see my future. A month ago, I would have done anything to meet a girl like this, have her as a masseuse. I would have given heaven and earth to have a boss as attractive and sexually charged as Ms. Severo and a job in one of the most prestigious locations in the center of the City of London.

I closed my eyes and slipped into a daydream as I was cleaned up and massaged. Creamed and powdered while my sore tattoos were gently cared for. I felt her hand slip between my legs to see that the waxed hair was not growing back. As I fantasized about what could have been, I felt her hand slip between my legs and run along my cock. The probing fingers eased my thighs apart and ran over my balls and then gathered my prick in their grip And I knew that despite any misgivings and losses, worries and fears, I could not help myself slipping into the bottomless chasm of outrage that was Coxtens Investments.

I was just starting to swell, just starting to react to those delicate hands when a sudden pain woke me from my delusion and took me back to the present and the reality of my existence. It was as if a knife had been stuck into my swelling prick, plunged into the hole in the tip to gouge me inside and out. I felt the hands that had been softly playing with me press down to hold me from jumping from the table in shock.

“It’s OK,” said a female voice. “I like it so far... a man can never wear too much jewelry. Of course, I expect gold and I prefer smaller and tighter rings, but I think that he will be finished soon.”

I turned my head and through the blurred tears in my eyes I saw Ms. Severo standing in the doorway. She was smiling broadly and speaking to the masseuse whose hands were pinning me to the table as she inserted the ring into my cock.

“Don’t forget to stud his tongue for me as well,” she said, as she walked to me and laid a hand on the blue-black cat and globe that were the bank’s trade mark. Her fingertip traced her name and then ran down my back to lose contact just before my ass.

“Floriana, Alexandra is going to train you for me because I want you perfect from the first day! You will listen carefully to her and obey every little instruction, won’t you? I think you realize that you are mine now, do with as I desire, don’t you? Tonight, she will show you your new home and tomorrow she will start the tuition that will turn you into an accomplished helper for me,” she said, in a quiet voice.

Her hand rested on my back.

“If you fail to please Alexandra then you are failing to please me,” she said, as her voice hardened. “Failure, in this company, always results in punishment of the very strictest variety and is never ever tolerated. It would be such a waste to have to punish you in ways that might reduce your serviceability and thus your value.”

The way she used the language, hinting at a black chasm that was opening beneath me if I did not meet her standards. She did not once tell me what the punishments were and what the crimes were that would invoke them, she just hinted while I lay naked on the leather topped bench. She touched me, it’s true, but I do not think that there was any affection in that contact, it was just like running your fingers over a new car and appreciating its value, its quality through the tips of one’s fingers.

I heard the steps on the tiled floor as Ms. Severo left the room. Soft hands soothed me and pressed me, signaling me to turn over. I slowly rotated for those hands and then looked down to see what new outrage had been committed against me. My cock, semi-stiff was adorned at the tip with a metal ring. It entered the tip, the eye of my prick and then issued from just below the place where tip and shaft join together.

A small amount of blood trickled down the shaft of my cock.

“That’s the first done, now you heard your boss, she wants your tongue pierced as well so let’s get on with it. Any moment, Miss Alexander will be here to take you to your new home, so let’s see that tongue. Don’t worry it doesn’t hurt at all really,” she said, as she poked out her own tongue to reveal that she too had a piercing there. “After a day the swelling goes down and then you can eat again.”

The needle passed through the loop on the forceps, it plunged through my tongue to be followed by the barbell. It did not hurt; not really, it was like a numbing through my tongue with that iron taste of the small amount of blood that I had shed.

“See, that wasn’t so bad was it?” said the masseuse as she inspected her work. “Ms. Severo really likes piercings and tattoos on a man! She would never have anything like that ruining her perfect body, she does not need any enhancement.”

I could taste blood. I had a terrible itch where the first piercing had been placed and I waited for a woman who I had never met before to take me to a place I had never been before. This job was all consuming, it was a new life. Finally, I was leaving everything behind.

Everything.

Residence

I wore a hospital gown that buttoned at the back and sat on the edge of the table in the masseuse's small studio. I looked at the soft clear skin on my legs, the hairless, svelte almost feminine smoothness that was almost natural. I lifted the robe and inspected the notice that had been written on me, the plaque of ownership that was topped by the ring that just peeped from my foreskin, the ring that Ms. Severo had had fitted on me.

The door opened and the receptionist walked in. Ever since the start, before the interview, I had felt attracted to her. The long legs with sheer nylon and the severe featured face with pulled back hair. She too wore peep toe heels and her toenails were manicured to points that almost cut her stockings as they curved slightly down.

As she entered, I dropped the hem of the gown and looked up at her.

"I am here to take Floriana to his new home," she said and I realized that this was the Alexandra that Ms. Severo had mentioned as my instructor.

She looked me up and down with scorn in her eyes and said, "The taxi is already waiting, why isn't he dressed yet?"

The masseuse pulled a small curtsy, something that she had not even done for Ms. Severo and looked down at the floor.

"I'm so sorry, but the new uniform has not arrived yet and his old clothes have been disposed of."

"Not good enough," said Alexandra, with a sniff. "Escort him down to the taxi and wait for me there, I can't go down with him dressed like a patient, what would everyone think?"

She stood straight as a pole. Breasts pushing against the thin cloth of her blouse while her high-waisted skirt turned her into a round hipped paradigm of a perfect secretary. She watched me pass by with pursed lips as I was led to the lift by the young masseuse.

"I'll be there in just five minutes," said Alexandra.

I sat in the back of the black saloon car that waited in the shade of the car port for half an hour or more before Alexandra turned up. She slipped into the front passenger seat with a small move of the hips and we were off. I had the strange idea that we would be driving a long way, but we simply crossed London Bridge turned into Upper Thames Street and then into the depths of a private garage below street level. Two levels down, she stepped out of the car with an elegant swing of the legs and led me to the lift that required a key to even call it.

The lift swished up the building and she led me into an apartment that looked like it was worth millions. If this was the apartment that the company was giving me just to have me close to work and Ms. Severo, all the things that had been done to me might well have been worth it! The walls

were decorated tastefully with oils and the carpets were so thick that it seemed that I was sinking ankle deep into their pile. The swaying hips of Alexandra were before me and I could almost not take my eyes off them. My tongue was starting to swell a little and my mouth was dry.

Still, she had not spoken a word to me directly, she just expected me to follow and how could I not?

At last, we came to a door like the others in this long corridor and she opened it.

“This will be your room in the apartment,” she said. “The door cannot be locked from the inside because you will be available for service at all times of the day or night. You have no right to privacy! Just the right to serve. You will stay in your room at all times unless your presence is requested explicitly. There are no facilities that you will be allowed to use for eating, so I suggest that you eat enough at Coxtens’ to tide you over. This is a temporary place where you will be for the next few days until Davina has finished your permanent residence. Clothes are arriving by courier in the next half hour. In half an hour I will need your presence because the maid is on holiday and your training will begin.”

I nodded at her and felt overwhelmed by it all. This woman who held such a command over me that I could not find it in myself to fight free. Attractive, commanding, beautiful and authoritative, she was in control and I could not gainsay any order she uttered. In my mind’s eye were the films, the feet walking and my eye hoping to see more, but forever being at her feet. Everything else faded into a mist of distance, everything but the heels, the ankles, the rippling nylon and those polished nails that were talons of an eagle.

I had to follow.

I stepped into the room and the door closed behind me. The key turned in the lock and I fumbled for a light switch, but there was none to find. No light, no window, not even the ghost of light around the door or through the keyhole. A room as black as darkest night that was to be my home. I walked around the walls to find that there was a sort of bed or cot, a simple chest of drawers and a very plain, hard chair. All three of them were fixed to the floor and immovable. The floor was covered in tiles that were cold to the touch and hard as glass.

I made my way to the cot and felt the mattress, sheets and the high sides of the barred bed. In the dark it seemed to be exactly like a cot for a small child, but with steel replacing the wood. I wondered if I should sit in the cot or on the chair and decided that the chair was the best idea. As I found it by crawling across the floor and holding my hands before me, I discovered that short chains led from the legs to fetters and chains. In fact, the chair was a place where a man could be fettered and manacled. I sat on it gingerly and waited in the dark for Alexander to return.

The swelling in my tongue started to reduce the piercing in the end of my cock stopped itching and just the hard seat of the chair was uncomfortable. The dark was warm but it frightened me so that I made another search of the walls. I systematically ran my hands up and down and could not find any light switches or any other feature for that matter. The walls were flat, the furniture was fixed, it was utterly dark and I feared the woman who had placed me here.

I started to fantasize. Could I overwhelm her, was I stronger? Could I free myself by force and what would happen if I did? I thought about the police coming for Marcia and realized that it would not end well if I tried to use force. On the other hand...

I heard the key in the lock and the dead bolts draw back.

The door opened and she was standing there, imperious, a figure of authority. I blinked in the light and stood from the chair.

“Take that silly robe off and come with me,” she said.

I slipped it over my head and dropped it on the cot. Now with the light from the door I could see that there really were no switches on the walls. The chains and straps on the wooden chair that were ready to hold me and the lid of the cot that was up and rested on the wall behind. The furniture was fixed to the floor with large steel plates that were screwed to the furniture with crude strength.

Alexandra stood watching and then pointed to the floor.

“Outside your room, when you are allowed out, you will always crawl,” she said. “Remember the film?”

I dropped to hands and knees and crawled after the woman whose hips swung as she walked, the woman whose feet had to stay in view. She led me to her bedroom and then she gave me my first lesson.

“Undress me!” she said.

I must have hesitated, because she said, “Start with the buttons of the skirt, Floriana.”

My fingers trembled as I reached up to just below those thrusting breasts to undo the top button with a fumble.

“That’s not the way to do it!” she said. “You will have to learn to undress your owner with no sight, so remember every move! You always start with the second button and then go to the topmost. When clothing is tight, start at the bottom and work your way up. Always keep your fingers steady and find a rhythm that is unbroken. Better to go a little slower, but be smooth, than to be fast and lurching.”

I started again and started from the bottom. It meant that my hands were at the top of the skirt when it fell free and I was able to slip it off, with a small flourish. I looked at the skirt in my hands and realized that I did not know what to do next.

“When you do this for your owner,” she said, referring to Ms. Severo, “she hates it if you touch her skin. In fact, you can expect to be punished for touching her naked skin. I shall do the same

to help you realize how difficult to undress a woman without touching her skin. Now place the skirt carefully on the bed for the moment. Later you will learn to be elegant with every single article of clothing and fold and dispose of it gracefully. Now, what comes next?"

I looked at her and swallowed in admiration. Stockings in a dark shimmering tan and those heels. A girdle smoothed over her hips and finished just below her waist to leave her pussy naked of hair, naked of lace and cloth, visible and tantalizing. Above that pussy were tattooed a few words of some love poem or quote,

Violet-haired, pure, honey-smiling

...in a flowing hand that led one's eye to that perfect slit of her pussy. Perfect because there was just the tight line of those lips. Nothing showed, but the gentle curve of that soft skin as it folded into her body.

"That's enough," said Alexandra, in patient voice. "Never stare, it is so very rude and may also be punished if your owner is in a bad mood. Actually," she added, "you won't be able to anyway."

It was the second time that she or anyone else had used the word 'owner', but it passed without further comment despite the truth of it.

"The next thing is always the legs. That means shoes and then stockings. Afterwards comes the girdle and the blouse. Just rub the tops of the stockings and they will drop off. Davina always wears those old-fashioned nylons that just slither down, so just a release and a touch are needed."

She lifted a foot gracefully backwards and I slipped off her shoe.

"Take the heel and tip it off the heel," she said. "As you do so make sure it slips off smoothly.

It came into my hand and she rested on her stockinged foot to lift the other heel while lifting the other foot for me.

"Never touch the foot," she added as she turned a little. "Now the stockings. Pull the small silk cover to lift the clasps and slip off the clasps one at a time. Always start at the front and work your way to the back in a smooth manner. Never allow yourself to touch."

I undid the six clasps that held her stockings up and they slipped down her legs quite without any assistance from me. It was at that point, when I suddenly realized what I was doing. I was undressing the most attractive woman that I had ever met, to her orders! I was living in a cubicle in her apartment, did that mean that I was going to be allowed to fuck her? The thought swept through my mind like a revelation and I felt my cock spring to attention as I looked up to see her smile.

"Now the other leg, Floriana," she commanded as she looked down and smiled. "You are allowed to look, for now, just take care that you do not touch."

Alexandra stepped from the pool of thin nylon on the carpet and turned again to look down again.

“Now tidy what you have done so far. The stockings are to be gently rolled up and the shoes placed side by side. Next is the blouse. Stand up.”

I stood and face her and my trembling hands went to the lowest button of her blouse.

“Always start at the top,” she said.

I opened the topmost fastened button and moved to the next as she stood while I slowly exposed those perfect breasts. Button by button they came into view until at last the blouse hung draped over her breasts. She turned and shrugged her shoulders as I carefully took the collar and allowed the silk to slip over her arms.

“Very good. Now the girdle. Get on your knees and start from the bottom.”

I undid the small hooks and pulled it free to leave her standing naked. The cleft of those cheeks, the rounded orbs of flesh that I longed to touch were before me. I could see her perfect cleft between through that small gap that the perfect figure of her body revealed. Soft closed lips that sealed with a small crease that led to the gathering of her ass hole. Perfectly smooth, waxed and pale, it gathered slightly as I watched.

Alexandra turned and placed a hand on the top of my head. Was she going to guide me to her pussy? Press me in to pleasure her and find the matrix concealed with tongue, lips and hands? I hoped and prayed that she needed me. Her hand ran through my hair and pulled me to look up her body into her eyes. The breasts hung slightly with their weight, the nipples were faded pink that was pierced by tiny bars of gold and her eyes looked into mine.

“Ms. Severo will be here later,” she said. “When she arrives, you will be called to serve us, until then you are to reflect on your duties in your room.”

She led me back to the darkened room and locked the door behind me.

I felt my way to the chair and cot in the utter black and sat waiting, hoping, for the next phase of this strange new life that was being revealed. My hands went to my cock, and tugged a little to find that the piercing suddenly made its presence felt with a painful twinge. I longed to wank, the picture of her in my head was fresh and real, but every time I tried to coax myself, I felt the soreness of that ring pulling and I could not do any more than bring myself to new heights of frustration.

I felt the ring with my fingers. It was open, just two small balls stopped me slipping it out of my cock. I fiddled with one of those metal balls and found that it turned to unscrew and started gently to release it from the ring. Fiddly, small and smooth it slowly turned to release me.

Dare I remove it? What would happen if Alessandra returned and found me playing with myself? I stopped and massaged my throbbing prick as I struggled between risk and sheer frustration. In my head was a picture of her looking down at me, the smile playing on her lips as her breasts moved with her breathing. That soft slit of her sex, the curve of her hips and the sweet clench of her ass hole. Then I thought of Ms. Severo, another beautiful woman, beyond erotic, but so out of reach, the woman who was to be my owner!

I retightened the small ball in a burst of fear.

Spiked

Alessandra watched the monitor with one eye as she got dressed. The ghostly black and white figure lacked detail in the dark, but infra-red never gives a clear picture. The figure sitting on the chair moved a little. The chair, nearly the same ambient temperature as the floor, scarcely showed on the picture, making it look as though Floriana was sitting in the air without support.

She sat on the edge of the bed and carefully bunched the soft stockings in her hands and started to pull them onto her feet. The figure on the chair moved again, catching Alessandra's eye.

His hands strayed to that little cock of his and seemed to be fiddling.

She stayed her hands and watched as he discovered that the piercing could be undone. Of course, it could be undone! But the risk was that the tiny ball would slip out of his fingers in the dark and be forever lost...

He seemed to be about to free himself and then suddenly thought better of it.

Alessandra smiled to herself and started pulling up her stockings once more. She knew that his unwillingness to risk freeing himself was a critical point of his enslavement, even if he did not appreciate it himself. It meant that now the next stages could be hurried along and Floriana was almost certain to follow the path that Alessandra's lover had predestined for him.

The short road to becoming the slave to his owner's feet...

Ms. Severo was coming soon and I dared not risk her anger! So, I sat on the chair, my feet resting on the chains and fetters that were lying on the tiles and felt my erection fade to nothing.

Another film played out in my mind, the film of those feet moving through the office. The curve of the heels, the long-manicured nails that pushed against the nylon of her stockings and the slim ankles that towered over me. Sex filled my mind, an overpowering need to serve.

I found myself being filled with a joyous sadness that forced tears from my eyes. The drops pooled and broke to trickle down my face with hopeless need and small sobs came from my lips. I was overcome with an emotion that was such a poignant distillation of fear, hope and longing that soon I was weeping with longing and consuming love for the women that were destroying me and all that I was.

How long I sat, filled with that emotional maelstrom of thought I do not know. The darkness consumed me. I experienced another erection that faded without relief. In my mouth I could feel that stud, just above the cock that signaled its need I ran my fingers over the brand that declared me to belong to a woman who I longed for and was terrified of.

A rattle and the door was opened flooding the room with light that revealed me to the eyes of the

two women that stood in the opening.

Ms. Severo, wearing her office suit stood with her arm around Alexandra who had dressed in a long gown of diaphanous silk that seemed to drape her in a smoke that allowed her body to be both concealed and revealed as she moved.

“He did well,” said the naked nymph. “I really thought that he was going to indulge himself, but he resisted the urge.”

“I think that he will be ideal,” said Ms. Severo. “Come!”

This last word was for me. I followed them, crawling and unable to tear my eyes from the rolling hips of my boss and the naked behind of Alessandra. They led me to the living room of the tasteful apartment where Ms. Severo sat on a plush sofa and Alessandra kneeled on the carpet before her, her long legs curved gracefully under her body with her body draped over the knees of her superior.

I stood before them and dared not move.

“Tomorrow, he starts in the office,” declared Ms. Severo. “Make sure that he is in uniform and ready by eight.”

“Do you think that’s a good idea?” asked Alessandra as her hand slipped from Ms. Severo’s ankle slowly up her leg. “I think that we should wait a few more days, he’s still not entirely ready for you.”

“He’ll do while I get the room ready for him.”

The hand slipped under the hem of the tight skirt. Ms. Severo’s legs relaxed and opened a little to allow Alessandra to push further. They stretched until the long heels rested on the carpet. A graceful movement that caused the hem of her skirt to ride up until her stocking tops showed to my hungry eyes.

“Just there,” said Ms. Severo, with a groan. “That’s perfect!”

I could see the hand wriggle a little more and a small smile played over Alessandra’s lips. The rustle of clothes as hips moved, the small moan from Ms. Severo as fingers slipped into her and found what they were seeking.

“My heels,” said Ms. Severo.

She was looking at me, eye to eye, and I got onto my knees and took her shoes in my hands. With one hand on the hardness of that stiletto I placed the other at the heel and started to take the shoe off in the way that Alessandra had taught me.

“Do not dare take them off!” came the voice from above. “Kiss them.”

I bowed and lifted the foot a little to my mouth. All I could see was the toes with their long nails, the smooth patent leather and the metal spikes of the heels as I pursed my lips and kissed the shiny leather.

Above me, far away I heard a small gasp, a delicate sound that tumbled down to my ears as Ms. Severo climaxed at the fingers of Alessandra. Another erection came and went as I put the heel in my lips and licked the tip with the tip of my tongue.

“That’s good,” said Ms. Severo, with a gasp, though whether the comment was for me or the fingers that had been permitted to pleasure her was not clear.

I carefully held the foot as if it were a porcelain figure and tentatively licked the sole and kissed that heel.

Another orgasm caused a tremor in that leg. The point of the heel pushed between my lips and deep into my mouth and I winced as it touched my pierced tongue. I almost cried in the pain, but managed to stifle the sound with a small gasp.

“Don’t stop,” said Alessandra, “now you are learning what your new job is.”

“The first time that a man serves is always special,” said Ms. Severo, as she watched me kiss her feet. “Floriana here is going to be perfect. Did you see how his little cock responded?”

“You picked him well!”

“I have something special for him,” said Ms. Severo, as she slowly sat up. “A reward for his first-time service.”

She reached to her hand bag and pulled a slim envelope from it. She flipped open the envelope and pulled a piece of paper out and I saw that it was a cheque.

“You may stop now,” said my owner. “This is a reward for you, a little ‘thank you’ that shows that I am not ungrateful.”

I gently rested the foot on the carpet and looked up to see the proffered piece of paper.

“Take it and sign,” she said.

I took the cheque and looked at it. At the top was the logo from the bank, underneath was written in a flowing hand, ‘fifty thousand pounds only’. There was space for two signatures and the name printed was mine and Ms. D. C. Severo.

“It is for me,” she said, in a matter-of-fact way. “You have to pay the rent and some other costs because I am redecorating the room for you.”

“But...” I said, as I looked at it and realized that her present to me was to take everything that I had.

“I did not ask for comment,” said Ms. Severo, “but I’ll let it pass this time! Here is a pen.”

I took the pen from her hand and looked at the cheque. No payee had been entered, but I knew the name that would be added.

“You will not need for anything, Floriana, when you serve me! Everything will be done for you, just sign and I will look after you.”

The pen felt awkward in my hand, the cheque lay on my knee. All I had to do was sign and she would be happy. I knew, deep inside, that this was a final surrender, but my hand shook and I could not move to sign.

“Where will you go, what will you do if Davina throws you onto the street?” asked Alessandra. “Everything that you own is under her control. You know that you want to serve her, you know that she owns you already, all you have to do is to show that you belong to her willingly and she will look after you.”

Still, I could not sign. Despite longing to kiss her feet again, despite my straining cock I found it impossible to put the pen to paper. As I wavered, I felt a small touch on my balls. Alessandra’s foot pressed against me and moved to stroke me. I could feel the toes and those nails scratching as she moved her elegant foot from side to side to finally pin my erection against my groin. “You know that you are going to sign,” said Alessandra.

There was a stillness, a total bubble of tranquility in the room, bated breath and expectancy as the foot stroked my cock and brought me total hardness that I had never experienced before. My hand shook as the tip of the pen touched the paper. The pen moved almost involuntarily as I felt my insides clench with a coming climax. I felt my balls react, a beginning of release and I signed.

“You see,” said Alessandra, “it’s what you needed to do!”

Her foot retreated and I was left kneeling at the feet of Ms. Severo panting with need, but incomplete. A hand descended and took the cheque from my hand with forefinger and thumb and I knew what the future held for me.

Ms. Severo did not want a lover. She did not want a sexual slave to touch and pleasure her to orgasm. She did not want a man who would serve her sexual needs. My hopes were of no interest, my needs were hers to decide and my body was branded with her name. What she wanted was a man who would love her from servitude, a man who would undress and undress her without ever being able to touch, a man who would blindly prove her perfection of domination with every service as she lay back and enjoyed the attention from her lover. All this, while he showed his devotion. She needed a man she could punish, taunt and play with as the need came. A man that proved her power was complete and fulfilled.

My cock dripped precum as I realized that I had surrendered to the woman of my dreams and nightmares. The woman whose name was forever branded into my flesh.

Under Secretary

“Are you really going to keep him under the desk all day every day?”

“That’s what he’s for, Margot. It will be delicious to have meetings and interviews with my little pet hidden there sucking my heels while I sit all demure and perfect. You keep Andrea there occasionally and I know what she does under that desk! When you cough, that’s when you come, when you cross your legs that’s when you grind his cock under your heels and when you touch that button under the rim of your desk, that’s when the vibrator in Andrea’s ass starts reaming the slave under your desk.”

“Well, it’s no secret.”

“Not inside the bank! It inspires such terror when you use the word ‘punishment’, Margot.”

“Aren’t you worried that he may give the game away?”

“Oh, he’d never do that!”

“Why ever not?”

“Because he loves me!”

The space under the desk is covered. On the back, mock drawers, on the front the solid oak that presented a plain face to the room. I am confined in that space with a leash at my neck and a hood covering my face. No eye holes, no openings but the one I need to breathe. Depersonalized by the tight suit that presses every inch of my skin, tight elastic latex that covers me from the hood to my ankles in a soft, close fitting smoothness. My new uniform.

I wait for her.

I hear

Darkness is what she offers me. The silent darkness of the room that I am renting at a price that exactly equals my salary. The darkness of the hood as I crouched under her desk serving her and the encroaching darkness of the obsession that she has created in my mind.

At the moment the leash is tight and pulls me to kneel under her desk as I bide my time in silence as the work of the bank goes on all around me. Occasionally the door opens and someone enters to place documents on her desk for her later attention. Now, after three months as Ms. Severo’s intimate toy, I can recognize her tread with certainty. I imagine the hips sway, the careful steps in those heels as she traverses the room and the slight gentle movement of her breasts under her blouse. In my head are those memories of her face that are given to me nightly. High boned and severe with thin lips that are scarlet against the white of her face. Eyes that penetrate even the

darkness of my hood with an occasional thin smile as she enjoys the one service that is required of me.

The door opened and I heard her tread. My mouth was dry with anticipation as I hear her speak.

Soon I would serve her...

"Please come in and sit down," she said.

A man's voice mumbled a 'thank you' as I hear her sit down.

"One moment please while I make sure that we are not disturbed," she said.

I heard the click of the intercom and imagined Alessandra at the other end of the line as I listened.

"I am unavailable for the moment," said Ms. Severo. "Half an hour?"

The man's voice spoke, "Just a few minutes actually."

"Please, tell me what it is that you need to know," said Ms. Severo.

I felt the leash slacken, the sign that my owner wanted me to serve her. She has not spoken to me for such a long time, she just signals and I obey her unspoken orders. Small signs that I have come to understand, movements and sounds that I am guided by.

"As you know," said the man, "we are following up on an investigation that was first triggered by Coxtens little problem several months ago."

I slowly bent to her foot. It always rested in the same place, suspended in mid-air with her crossed legs. The leather was smooth and warm and beckoned my tongue as I kissed the heel.

"Ah, yes," she said. "Mr. O'Connell. A slight embarrassment for us, I suppose, but it is so difficult to find honest people nowadays. Have you found him?"

"I'm afraid not," said the man's voice. "He has vanished, who knows where! Our fraud department has processed the evidence that you gave us and has advised me that the bank should complete the insurance claim. If we stumble across him in the future, they will recover what they can from him."

The foot lifted to present her sole to my lips and I carefully cleaned it with my tongue. I could feel the heel pressing into my chin as I worked from top to bottom and then moved on to close my lips around the cold metal.

“The total is here,” he said.

I heard the rustle of paper being passed hand to hand and then a small ‘Mm’ from Ms. Severo. The heel pushed a little into my mouth and I knew that she wanted me to fuck it with my mouth. A small surge of satisfaction filled me that I was able to please her as she desired and I felt myself stiffen in response.

“Well, I’ll pass it to the legal department, of course.”

“Officially the case is still open while there is hope that we can find him, but in my opinion, he has probably left the UK by now and is living on the continent under a false name. Occasionally they make a mistake and we catch them through Interpol,” he said, “but until then...”

“I appreciate your efforts, Inspector,” said Ms. Severo. “Let’s hope he does get caught. It was a grave mistake to give him such responsibility so quickly.”

“Thank you, and I must say that we are grateful to you for releasing all of the evidence so promptly, I’m just sorry that he slipped through our fingers.”

“Coxkens’ is happy to cooperate with any inquiry,” said Ms. Severo, as she pressed her heel deep into my mouth. “If we can be of further service, then we are always here.”

The police Inspector left the office and there was a moment of still before Ms. Severo uncrossed her legs and slowly lowered her foot. I allowed the heel to slip from my lips and followed it to the floor. I knew what was coming next and my heart thumped in my chest with excitement. As I kissed the uppers of her shoe, I heard the rustle of cloth as her legs parted and her hand slipped to that perfect pussy.

You may kiss me,” she said, in a horse whisper.

The first words that she had spoken to me in such a long while. Tentatively I moved slightly to take her foot in my hand and slip off the shoe. Only a few special times had this happened before and I was determined not to fail her expectations of perfect service.

“You may,” she gasped.

I could feel the shiver in that leg as the shoe slipped smoothly and effortlessly from her foot to leave it cradled in my trembling hands. I reverently placed the shoe on the carpet and lifted her foot to my mouth. The first touch of my tongue on the rough nylon brought a feeling of utter devotion flooding into my mind.

Far above me her hand slowly opened the buttons down the side of that pencil skirt. I heard each one being released and shivered in anticipation of her pleasure as I felt my lips close on her toes.

“Let me feel it,” she murmured and I knew what she wanted.

So close had I become to her that she did not have to tell me. I knew by instinct and training that she wanted to feel the stud in my tongue on her toes. The tickle of the small spike that had become a part of me a week after I had served her the first time.

“Oh,” she groaned.

I trailed my tongue over the top of her toes, tracing their length, each one, with the hard metal that she had had placed into me. At each movement, I felt her shiver as her hand slipped between her thighs. Her legs opened slightly and shook as I served her with utter devotion.

When her climax came it took her completely. She twisted in the chair and her foot pulled from my grasp. Small cries sounded and she trembled in ecstasy. Then she did something that was new. Something that so filled me with gratitude that I was filled with love for her.

Her hand sought my mouth. I felt it move over the mask of my face until at last a single finger pushed between my lips and I savored the sweet taste of her climax. A clear heady taste that I savored as she ran her finger over my tongue and felt the stud with a soft touch.

It was a perfect moment.

Fulfilling every hope that I had in her need for my service. A recognition of the bond between us, the generous impulse of a woman who owned me and was satisfied with all my efforts to gratify her.

No words of command were needed from her lips, no order or spoken sound. I slipped the shoe onto her precious foot with all the grace at my command and risked a final kiss to the toes that peeped from them.

She did not admonish me. I had put the final seal on our love.

Service

“Why do you keep him in the darkness all the time?”

“Because when he sees me, he is really touching me with his eyes and that is not allowed in my little fantasy.”

“So, does he never see any light?”

“Of course, he does, poor little pet Floriana sees the same film every night, he watches like the helpless housebroken man that he is and cries tears of emotion as he realizes that my shoes are all that he will ever be allowed to have of me.”

“Do you think that he can hear us through the walls then? Can he hear you cum when I fuck you or some stud gets to service you?”

“Alessandra, that is what it is all about. Nobody can ever own me, not you, not Florian, not the men that are allowed to fuck me. No one! All of you must understand that I am shared between my passions and my other loves. When we are together, I just switch on the microphone and he can hear every whisper and cry. I only turn it on when he should hear me being gratified, it is just all part of his training.”

“You are a wicked bitch.”

“You knew the rules when I first allowed you through the door. You are an entertainer, but one that I love. Just enjoy your share and I’ll show you how he longs for me when he hears me cum. The infra-red camera allows me to enjoy every moment.”

I know that she has lovers.

Alessandra, her perfect handmaiden and men that spend the night pleasing her body. I try to imagine what it would be like to serve her in this way and I cannot imagine how I could cope with the honor. What would it be to touch her perfect breasts, to part those thighs and behold her lips opening to receive my meagre prick? I hear them sometimes coming and going during the night, the cries of pleasure and ecstasy coming through the thin wall that separates me from her boudoir and I am not jealous, because I know that she reserves the best part of herself for me.

I live to kiss her shoes, allow the spike of her heel to fuck my mouth and lavish as much love and care as I am permitted. I know that she needs me, that she is brought to heights by my service that could never be attained by any other lover. I live for the times that she allows my lips to close over her nylon clad feet and bring her to a climax that is so intimate and dignified that it is sufficient to keep me in her thrall. During the long darkness that fills my life, lit by occasional devotion, I do not long for my own release, I know that it will never come. It is her pleasure that fills me with need and release.

I know that all the directors of Coxtens have a pet man who serves them day and night. Helpless slaves to fill their need for dominance, but I feel so lucky that it I was chosen by Ms. Severo. She does not punish me with the cane like Mistress Valentina, the chief director does her slaves, she does not humiliate me with other men like Mrs. Davis, the director in charge of private accounts. No, Ms. Severo lavishes me with attention and looks after me as she promised.

I undress her every night, at first just fumbling in the darkness until at last, I could perform to her total satisfaction. Skirt, shoes and stockings. Girdle or Basque to be unlaced or unhooked, followed by her blouse and the endless buttons that hold her perfect body from the gaze of others. Almost never am I permitted to touch her skin, not even when I showed my devotion by kissing her shoes. Then I am leashed and led to my room and confined in my cage to await her need. When the door closes, then it is my time!

Sometimes I hear her in the house and I almost wish that I could serve her as she sports with Alessandra or some deep voiced man, but then if she does not need me, who am I to long to please?

In the darkness I am allowed to slip off the hood, rolling it until I am free. Undressing from the tight uniform in the total darkness and performing the few tasks that are mine to do in the black of my unlit room. Food lays in the bowl for me on the floor in the same place, next to it the bowl of water to lap at. If I have been good, if the mood that takes her is generous then I find table scraps in the bowl. Then I feel my way to the shower and perform my ablutions under the freezing cold trickle of water that makes my skin prickle with goose bumps. When it is done, I dry in the warm air of the room, standing in the total darkness as I drip onto the hard tiles of the floor.

This is the only time that is mine, but it is enough for me.

No more than the time that it takes to count in my head to a thousand.

My hands move over my skin as I think of her. It is the only time that I dare to imagine her as 'Davina'. If I have been allowed to please her toes, then this is the time that I replay the event in my head and relish the trust that she puts in me. I would never dare think of her that way in her presence; there her name is Ms. Severo. My hands often wander to my prick, they play with the metal cover, the thin bars that ensure that I cannot play with myself. A single spur is locked onto that pierced ring in my cock that now has been closed and can never be removed.

I know that she occasionally watches me, a ghostly naked form that glows warm for the cameras that monitor my behavior and will punish me if I dare to do more than run my hands over myself during this time that is my own. The punishment is always wordless denial until I long to please her. Long days of being unable to kiss her shoes, long nights with bitter food and salty water.

At the end of my personal time there is always a slight click.

I do not know if it sounds for my benefit or if it is simply the sound of the screen switching on, but I do know that when it sounds, I must be kneeling, prepared to watch the film that plays for my benefit. The film that never varies and always draws me a little deeper into the love that I cherish for her.

A slight glow fills the huge screen out of reach on the wall.

Enough for my eyes, though too dim to light the room, the film plays and fills me with an emotion that is so difficult to put into words. Sadness, love or perhaps gratitude, I always cry when that film starts.

There is no sound at the beginning, just a haze of foggy light that resolves slowly to reveal a high heeled stiletto that dangles from the toes of my owner. The shoe moves hypnotically before a hand, graceful and covered in gold rings, pulls the shoe onto the foot until the toes are pushed through the small gap at the toe. Dark brown nylon covers the toes and the crimson nails curve wickedly downward. The foot stays, hovering clear of the floor. It moves, sways gently and occasionally that hand slips over the ankle to massage the ankle and smooth over the leather. Music swells and throbs in the background as I strain to hear what is being said in the background. I know that it is her voice, but the words are blurred and out of focus as I stare at the only thing that I am permitted to see. The music recedes and I know that soon I will see, just for second her face as it is faded in and she smiles at me. I bathe in her approval and tears stream down my face as her smile fades to be replaced by a worm's eye of Ms. Severo walking in slow motion through the office. I see the way that her heels press into the carpet, the flex of the leather as she walks, the angle of her ankle and the movement of skin and muscles under the nylon of the stockings. Finally, she turns and stands to allow me to take in every detail, to implant it in my memory for the times when I am allowed to serve.

A final, long held chord fills my ears and the screen darkens to signal that I am allowed to rest. How long is the film? I do not know. I just wish that it ran forever. I have come a long way and I have further to go. I know that she has plans for me, new torments to test my devotion and new services to gratify her need for her helpless pet.

I just know that when my alarm sounds from that screen at the beginning of my day that I must awake and prepare for another day of service. Dress, finish my food and stand to attention for a new day of devotion.

The door opens and her maid takes my leash to lead me down to her limousine.

I spend the day at her feet.

I spend the day at her heels.

It is the perfect job.

The Beginning Of The End

“Reward?”

“Guess?”

“I have no idea, Davina, what you would call a reward for a man who spends his life at your feet, just so that you can climax as he licks your shoes!”

“I occasionally allow him to suck my toes! That is all he needs to be so close to climaxing. I watch that little cock of his hanging in its cage, dangling from that suit. It swells and presses against the bars of its confinement with such pathetic determination while it leaks as he sucks my toes. I never realized that it would be satisfying to have a man just to satisfy a small kink of mine so completely.”

“There is something to be said for it, I suppose, but my interests lie in other directions.”

“Ah, the perfect Alessandra has a wish. Can her lover help her make her dreams come true?”

“Maybe! I am just thinking about it and wondering what it is that I really want from a pet man. I love the way that yours is not allowed to touch you, he serves without even contact. What I want is something a little more radical really.”

“So, tell me. Your birthday is coming up and I would love to give you the perfect pet. What is it that you want then, a man who becomes a maid, a helpless puppet waiting for you when you get home from work? Are you like Margot, do you want someone that you can use to relieve all that stress in an orgy of his pain as he practices sucking other men’s cocks?”

“No, much more practical, I was thinking how a man would be perfect for the bathroom, a latrine for the little girl’s room in my apartment, ready whenever I want. Built in and an integral part of the fittings.”

“That’s a wonderful idea, Alessandra. It’s about time you had a personal assistant too, we’ll set up the interviews for a weeks’ time and go from there.”

I saw the advertisement in the Guardian employment pages. A small add placed in the financial section.

I suppose that I am a little overqualified to be a PA, but I really do need the job and Coxtens Bank offers the strong possibility for advancement, well once I’m inside anyway. With my perfect qualifications it should be a piece of piss!

The End